



# U.S. Coast Guard Marine Safety Office Louisville Information Bulletin



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## FIRE PROTECTION MEASURES FOR TOWING VESSELS

The final rule on Fire Protection Measures for Towing Vessels became effective on September 27, 2000. This regulation requires that towing vessels be fitted with a general alarm, fire detection system for engine rooms, internal communication systems, and remote fuel shut-off valves. It also requires fire-fighting drills and training requirements. Beginning October 8, 2001, towing vessels that are not exempted must comply with this regulation.

Title 46 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 27.100 exempts towing vessels that are:

1. Used solely within a limited geographic area, such as fleeting area for barges or commercial facility, or used solely for restricted service, such as making up or breaking up larger tows.
2. Used solely for assistance towing as defined by 46 CFR Section 10.103;
3. Used solely for pollution response;
4. Exempted by the Captain of the Port (for a specified route, 46 CFR Section 27.100(c));
5. A Public vessel that is owned, or demise chartered, and operated by the U. S. Government or by a government of a foreign country; and that is not engaged in commercial service; or
6. A foreign vessel engaged in innocent passage.

If you believe your towing vessel should be exempted from the Fire Protection Measures contained in 46 CFR Part 27, you should submit a written request to my office. Your request should address the name of the towing vessel, details of the vessel characteristics (i.e. gross tonnage, horsepower), operations of the vessel, area to be transited, and any equivalent fire protection systems currently in place. Your vessel will not be exempted in the COTP Louisville zone unless a written request is approved by my office. **After October 8, 2001, any vessel not complying with 46 CFR Part 27 will be prohibited from operating.**

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact my Cooperative Towing Vessel Coordinator at (502) 582-5194.

P. MEHLER III  
Lieutenant Commander  
U. S. Coast Guard  
Alternate Captain of the Port  
Louisville, Kentucky

*Please visit our web site at <http://www.uscg.mil/d8/mso/louisville/index.html>*